

Message Text

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64

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 INT-08 SCEM-02 COME-00 TRSE-00

OMB-01 SCI-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01 /154 W

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P R 090255Z NOV 73

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8659

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

13TH AF

CINCPACREPPHIL

CINCPACREP MARIANAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, HK

SUBJECT: PETROLEUM

REF: MANILA 12482

SUMMARY. ALTHOUGH PETROLEUM SUPPLIES NOT TIGHT YET IN HONG KONG, THERE IS GROWING CONCERN THAT SITUATION MAY CHANGE RAPIDLY DEPENDING ON DEVELOPMENTS AND DECISIONS ELSEWHERE. MOST U.S. CARRIERS REPORT NO BUNKERING PROBLEMS TO DATE. STOCKS ON HAND ADEQUATE TO MEET NORMAL REQUIREMENTS FOR NEXT 30-50 DAYS, BASED ON ASSUMPTION THAT FUEL SUPPLIES WILL CONTINUE TO ARRIVE

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NORMALLY FROM REFINERIES IN SINGAPORE AND ELSEWHERE. DESPITE

OFFICIAL SURFACE CALM, HONG KONG GOVERNMENT PREPARING QUIETLY TO INTRODUCE RATIONING AT SHORT NOTICE IF NECESSARY. SUPPLIES FOR NORMAL USN AND USAF REQUIREMENTS APPEAR TO BE ADEQUATE FOR NEAR TERM. END SUMMARY.

1. POLL OF SEVERAL U.S. OIL, AIRCRAFT AND SHIPPING FIRMS INDICATES FUEL SUPPLY IN HONG KONG NOT TIGHT - YET. OIL COMPANIES REPORT USERS HAVE INCREASED DEMANDS FOR FUEL BECAUSE THEY CANNOT GET NORMAL SUPPLIES IN THE U.S. AND ELSEWHERE. CALTEX, ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM NEW YORK HEAD-QUARTERS, HAS QUIETLY INFORMED CUSTOMERS HERE, INCLUDING AIRLINES AND SHIPPING COMPANIES, THAT FUEL SUPPLIED TO THEM WILL BE REDUCED 10 PERCENT BELOW LEVEL SUPPLIED OVER LAST 9 TO 12 MONTHS. MOBIL REPORTS SITUATION STILL NORMAL, ALTHOUGH UNDERSTANDS SHELL HAS BEEN NOTIFIED TO CUT BACK 10-12 PERCENT EFFECTIVE DECEMBER. SEA-LAND VESSELS ON SCHEDULE, NO TROUBLES HERE OR IN JAPAN TO DATE. PACIFIC FAR EAST LINE APPARENTLY RESOLVING DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING 12,000 BARRELS BUNKER FUEL FOR VESSEL ARRIVING HERE NOVEMBER 9. ESSO HAS INFORMED NORTHWEST THAT ESSO STOCKS SUFFICIENT TO PROVIDE NORMAL SUPPLY UNTIL DECEMBER, WHEN ADDITIONAL TANKERS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE HERE FROM SINGAPORE, UNLESS HONG KONG GOVERNMENT INTERVENES. THE GOVERNMENT IS STILL SPEAKING PUBLICLY OF CURRENT STOCKS SUFFICIENT TO LAST 30 TO 50 DAYS, BUT IS WIDELY EXPECTED TO ANNOUNCE INTRODUCTION OF FUEL RATIONING IN NEAR FUTURE. PLANNING TO THIS EFFECT UNDERSTOOD CONFIDENTIALLY TO BE UNDERWAY.

2. SUPPLY POSITION FACING U.S. NAVY HERE IS SIMILAR TO THAT OF COMMERCIAL USERS, AND HAS BEEN REPORTED THROUGH U.S. NAVY FLEET CHANNELS. MOBIL HAS INFORMED DLO AIR LIAISON OFFICER THAT MOBIL WILL CONTINUE TO MEET CONTRACT TERMS, AND NO PROBLEM FORESEEN THEREFORE IN HANDLING NORMAL USAF TRAFFIC IN NEAR FUTURE.
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